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SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INDIAN MPAT PLANNERS AND LIAISON OFFICERS TO CSF-536 AND PACOM HEADQUARTERS

Classified By: Ambassador David Mulford. Reasons 1.4 (B,D).

1. (C) This message responds to State action request: ref 060115Z Jan 05 SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR COUNTRY LIAISON OFFICERS FOR TSUNAMI ASSISTANCE AND PACOM REQUEST.

2. (C) Based on directions in cable (ref para 1), and communications between USPACOM J-5, OSD, and USDAO New Delhi, Ambassador today delivered a formal letter of request to India's Defense Secretary, India's Foreign Secretary, and National Security Advisor as follows:

A. That India send two military officers to work within CSF-536's Multi-National Planning and Augmentation Team (MPAT) in Utapao, Thailand, and that these MPAT planners be selected from a list of Indian officers who have been participants in TEMPEST Express and other PACOM sponsored MPAT exercises and conferences.

B. That India sends a Liaison officer to CSF-536 in Utapao. This officer will be involved in coordinating information about current Indian military operations in support of regional relief efforts and receiving the same information concerning US and other militaries regional relief operations.

C. That India sends a liaison officer to PACOM Headquarters at Camp Smith, in Honolulu, Hawaii. This individual will be involved in strategic level coordination of international military relief operations for the affected region, and interact with the Joint Operations Center cell at PACOM and with other foreign liaison officers.

D. Letter specifies that this request takes effect immediately and requests the MPAT planners and the LNO to Utapao arrive no later than 10 Jan 2005. The LNO to PACOM should arrive as soon as possible. Currently, transportation to both locations would be on a self-funded/arranged basis. Letter stated that PACOM is working on providing administrative support, subsistence, and transportation for international liaison officers to Camp Smith. Indian personnel to Utapao should be administratively self-sufficient, deploying with field gear and laptop computer.

E. Ambassador's letter mentions US force lay down for Tsunami relief operations, CSF-536 organizational structure and subordinate elements, to include the Combined Support Groups on the ground in Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia. Ambassador pointed out that US and Indian military attaches and relief support personnel are already communicating and effectively sharing information on the ground in Sri Lanka.

3. (C) Ambassador first mentioned this proposal today via phonecon with National Security Advisor M.K. Narayanan, and followed up with hard copy of letter delivered to Narayanan's office. Narayanan said he would brief the Prime Minister. Ambassador sent a copy of the request to India's Foreign Secretary Saran. (Foreign Minister Natwar Singh is in

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Indonesia).

4. (C) Because of a medical appointment, Defense Minister Mukherjee was unavailable. Instead, Ambassador and DATT met with India's Defense Secretary A.V. Singh and handed him the letter of request, in addition to background information on the MPAT program, and MPAT Tempest Express 7 which India co-hosted in July-Aug 2004. Also present were MEA Joint Secretary (Canada and US) S. Jaishankar, and MOD Joint

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Secretary G. Mukhopadhyaya (International Cooperation).

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5. (C) Singh politely accepted the Ambassador's letter and told the Ambassador he would study the proposal, brief Defense Minister Mukherjee, and would soon get back with the Ambassador. Singh said that perhaps we all could meet again to discuss it after they studied it. Singh then asked several questions about the CSF-536 organization. Singh asked how this set up interacts with the UN in the relief efforts and how and if the UN was in the picture. Mukhopadhyaya asked what is the relationship between the CSF-536 effort involving multinationals and the ASEAN Special

Summit convened to deal with relief efforts? Singh wondered aloud whether or not the best level to deal with the requirements for recovery-reconstruction efforts, would be at the local level, and whether having planners so far removed from the scene would be more effective. Singh also raised a concern that we should take care that the local government of affected states not feel that they are being dictated to by planners removed from the scene. Mukhopadhyaya asked for a list of countries that are participating in the CSF, LNOs, and MPAT planners. Singh asked how long this effort was envisaged to last and what is the time scale that the planners would be planning for.

16. (C) DATT reviewed the success of MPAT Tempest Express 7 and reiterated that the MPAT exercise effort had trained military planners for exactly the kind of scenario that has unfolded and that India has a ready trained cadre of planners. DATT review the rationale for LNOs at CSF-536 and PACOM Headquarters. Ambassador reiterated that with the success of Indo-US military cooperation programs, we now have a great opportunity to operationalize the military-to-military relationship. Singh thanked the Ambassador for having presented the letter and looked forward to further discussion on the proposal. Ambassador and DATT departed Singh's office approximately 30 minutes prior the scheduled phone call to Singh from USD(P) on the same subjects.

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